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## **Navajo President Shelly States Health Issues to IHS Director Roubideaux**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.-** Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly outlined health concerns for the Navajo Nation to Indian Health Services Director Dr. Yvette Roubideaux during a meeting Friday afternoon.

President Shelly outlined issues such as, construction of health care facilities, the Navajo Medicaid Feasibility Study, the need for

consolidation of funds for Department of Human Health and Services for American Indians and Alaska Natives and potential budget cuts.

“Our pressing concern is the looming impact of the automatic across-the-board budget cut for federal programs come January. We are concerned about the extent to which it may decrease funding for direct health service and health facilities construction,” President Shelly said.

Dr. Roubideaux said potential budget cuts concerns her as well and asked the Navajo Nation to bring forth plans that would minimize budgetary constraints to key programs.

President Shelly thanked Roubideaux for keeping five health center projects on the facilities construction priority lists, including a health facility being constructed in Kayenta, Ariz.

President Shelly expressed gratitude Roubideaux for helping the Navajo Nation complete the Navajo

Medicaid Feasibility Study in July, and adding that he wants to see the Navajo Nation administer Medicaid on the Navajo Nation.



(Left to Right) Vice President Rex Lee Jim, IHS Director Dr. Yvette Roubideaux, President Ben Shelly and Council Delegate Jonathan Hale.

President Shelly closed his statement by recommending that the Department of Human and Health Services consolidate funding for American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

“We recommend the DHHS to develop a plan, policy, or authority that will transfer all health care and public health services-related funds to the IHS, as a point of contact, and for the funds to be authorized and eligible for contracting or compacting consistent with Public Law 93-638,” President Shelly said.

Nearly 20 people attended the meeting including Vice President Rex Lee Jim and Council Delegate Jonathan Hale.

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